

Testimony of

Mr. Kent “Oz” Nelson

**Retired Chair and CEO, United Parcel Service
And
Co-Chair, Friends of CDC
Atlanta, Georgia**

Presented to the

Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education

Committee on Appropriations

United States House of Representatives

on behalf of the Friends of CDC

**March 29, 2006
2:00 p.m.**

Chairman Regula, Representative Obey, and members of the Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to present testimony on behalf of the Friends of CDC to discuss infrastructure funding for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in the FY2007 budget. My name is Oz Nelson, and I am the Retired Chair and CEO of United Parcel Service and the Co-Chair of the Friends of CDC.

I would like to begin my testimony by offering sincere thanks on behalf of the Friends of CDC for the efforts of the Subcommittee in securing funding for CDC Buildings and Facilities in the FY2006 Labor, Health and Human Services Appropriations Bill. We are extremely grateful for your commitment to this important effort.

Before I tell you more about the condition of the CDC and the need for continued Congressional action, I would like to tell you why I am involved in this effort and about the Friends of CDC. Following a 1999 CEO tour of several of CDC's totally inadequate labs and office facilities, the Corporate Friends of CDC was organized for the sole purpose of highlighting the need for infrastructure funding for the Centers for Disease Control at its two Atlanta-based campuses. This group currently includes BellSouth, United Parcel Service, GE Power Systems, The Home Depot, Inc., Cox Enterprises, Inc, Southern Company, Theragenics Corporation, and HCA. It is a voluntary, civic minded group deeply concerned that the facilities at the nation's premier public health institution could be allowed to deteriorate to the point they were when this endeavor began.

Since their formation in 1999, the Friends have advocated with officials at CDC, HHS, OMB and Congress for full and timely funding of the CDC Buildings and Facilities Master Plan. During the last six years Congress has appropriated \$1.137 billion towards the Master Plan, resulting in an historic and far-reaching construction project that has changed the face of CDC. But the job is not yet complete. The total cost of the Master Plan is \$1.562 billion and to that end we are requesting \$250 million in the FY2007 budget for improving CDC buildings and facilities.

As you know, the range of CDC's assignments has grown tremendously over the past decade. The CDC is on the front lines of defense protecting the health of every American because of its ability to identify, classify, and recommend courses of action in dealing with a potential biological, radiological, or chemical attack in the United States or around the world. This being said, several of the CDC facilities still do not offer a sufficient level of security or an adequate support structure to CDC's scientists.

Since CDC began executing the Master Plan (Fiscal Years 2000-2009), a series of threats to the nation's health and security have emerged, ranging from terrorist attacks to the rapid spread of the West Nile Virus to the emergence of SARS, Avian Flu, Marburg Virus, and monkeypox. These threats continue to challenge CDC's capacity and plainly illustrate the need for additional funding to accelerate the CDC's Master Plan and enable the CDC to be better prepared and capable of responding to the range of public emergencies which the United States is likely to face in the coming years.

In addition to infectious diseases, CDC works on preventing chronic diseases such as cardiovascular disease, cancer, and diabetes. Other areas of CDC's activities include maximizing the immunization rates of children and adults; preventing a wide range of environmental diseases by preventing exposure to toxic chemicals; conducting examinations and surveys to produce data on the health of Americans; preventing and controlling injuries; protecting employees from workplace injuries and diseases; and the training of public health and other health care workers throughout the country.

Thanks to your support, CDC is making substantial progress in implementing the 10-year Master Plan for buildings and facilities for the Atlanta-based portion of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. In addition, progress has been made on both the Edward R. Roybal Campus near Emory University and the Chamblee Campus in construction of new labs and support buildings, upgrades to physical security, and upgrades to vital campus infrastructure such as electrical power and water.

The new Emerging Infectious Disease Laboratory (Building 18), an 11 floor building able to accommodate up to 580 employees, was completed in 2005 and replaced five existing Roybal Campus lab buildings. The new facility, the world's most advanced laboratory, will triple the agency's capacity to conduct research and response involving pathogens requiring the highest levels of safety precautions. Building 18 has Biosafety level (BSL)-2 and -3 laboratories located in the 11-story tower portion and BSL-3 agriculture and BSL-4 laboratories located in the high-containment block. CDC is one of only four facilities in the United States with Biosafety level (BSL)-4 laboratory space capable of handling pathogens for which there is no treatment or vaccine. That kind of mission requires intensive emphasis on safety. The building is equipped with high-tech security features including biometric security devices like iris scans and fingerprinting in the high-containment laboratories.

In addition, several additional buildings have been planned or are under construction as part of the CDC's 10-year Master Plan, including the East Campus Consolidated Laboratory Project (Building 23), the Epidemiology Research Support Facility (Building 24), the Environmental Health/ATSDR Research Support Facility (Building 106), the Environmental Health Research Support Facility (Building 107), and the Chronic Diseases Research Support Facility (Building 108). In 2005 CDC completed several projects including the Emerging Infectious Disease Laboratory (Building 18), the Global Communications Center (Building 19), the Headquarters and Emergency Operations Center (Building 21), the Roybal West Campus Central Utility Plant, the Roybal West Campus Parking Deck, the Roybal Campus Visitor Center, and Environmental Toxicology Laboratory (Building 110). In addition, Building 20, the Program Support and Lifestyle Center, is scheduled for completion in 2006, which will include program support facilities and a transshipment center.

In 2005 CDC completed several projects including the Headquarters and Emergency Operations Center and have underway several buildings focusing on epidemiology research, environmental health and chronic diseases. But our job is not done. In Fiscal 2007, we are requesting \$250 million for CDC's Buildings and Facilities.

With these funds, CDC would devote \$50 million to its East Campus Consolidated Laboratory, which will house more than 470 infectious and parasitic diseases research personnel all-in-one contiguous structure, enhancing collaboration and efficiency among CDC's public health professionals as well as replace outdated labs from the Roybal and Chamblee campuses that are beyond their useful lives, too costly to maintain and incapable of being updated to new lab safety standards.

Another \$138 million would be directed to begin planning and construction of an Environmental Health Research Support Facility and \$32 million for the Chronic Diseases Research Support Facility. These buildings are critical scientific research buildings that predominantly house the research scientists working on issues including birth defects and developmental disabilities, chronic diseases, and genomics. Research conducted in these buildings has a direct affect on the quality and length of life as well as the cost of medical care. The scientists and doctors researching these topics are currently spread out in leased space over multiple buildings at three different campuses in Atlanta.

Finally, \$30 million would be dedicated to the nationwide facilities repairs and improvements program to enhance and maintain CDC-owned facilities in Atlanta, Cincinnati, Fort Collins, Morgantown, Pittsburgh, San Juan and Spokane.

This investment is critical to assuring that CDC scientists are physically and logistically equipped to protect our businesses and our families from the growing threats of terrorism and emerging diseases over the coming decades.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on behalf of the Friends of CDC.